1986 Quinquennial Review

BACKGROUND PAPER No.3

Regional Population Trends and Projections

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1 Introduction

1.1 The 1986 Quinquennial Review - Background Papers

The Part I Official Plan for the City of Toronto contains provisions that require a review at five year, or quinquennial, intervals of certain indicators relating to the office deconcentration policies of the Plan. Such a review is required in 1986. As part of the 1986 Quinquennial review, a series of discrete background papers covering a range of factors relating to the rate and distribution of office, employment and population growth is being published.

The City of Toronto is the hub of the economy of the metropolitan region and will continue to be the dominant centre of employment - hence a transportation focal point for many of the Region's residents. Interpreting regional population and household growth patterns is therefore essential if one wishes to understand and anticipate future travel behaviour in a comprehensive fashion.

Over the last ten years, the rate of population growth in the Toronto Region has slowed considerably from the explosive pace set in the 1950s and 1960s. Nevertheless substantial growth will continue in years to come. Almost all of this net additional growth will likely occur in the regional municipalities surrounding Metropolitan Toronto.

The subject report, **Regional Population Trends and Projections**, comprises Background Paper No. 3, and examines recent population trends, the projected magnitude of future population growth, where this growth is expected to occur and the relationship of these factors to employment growth.

1.2 Executive Summary

- The population of the Toronto Region now stands at 3.6 million and has grown at an average rate of just over 50,000 persons per year since 1981.

- Current projections suggest that the total population of the Region will reach 4.7 million by the year 2011. Nearly all (97 percent) of the additional growth in population is projected to occur outside Metropolitan Toronto.

- Between 1985 and 2011, Metro Toronto's population is projected to hold constant at just under 2.2 million while the population of the regional municipalities surrounding Metro is projected to almost double from 1.5 million to 2.6 million.

- Employment growth (where people work) is not decentralizing as rapidly as resident labour force growth (where workers live). As a consequence, commuting from the fringe regions into Metropolitan Toronto can be expected to increase significantly. By the year 2001, more workers are projected to be living in the fringe than in Metro.

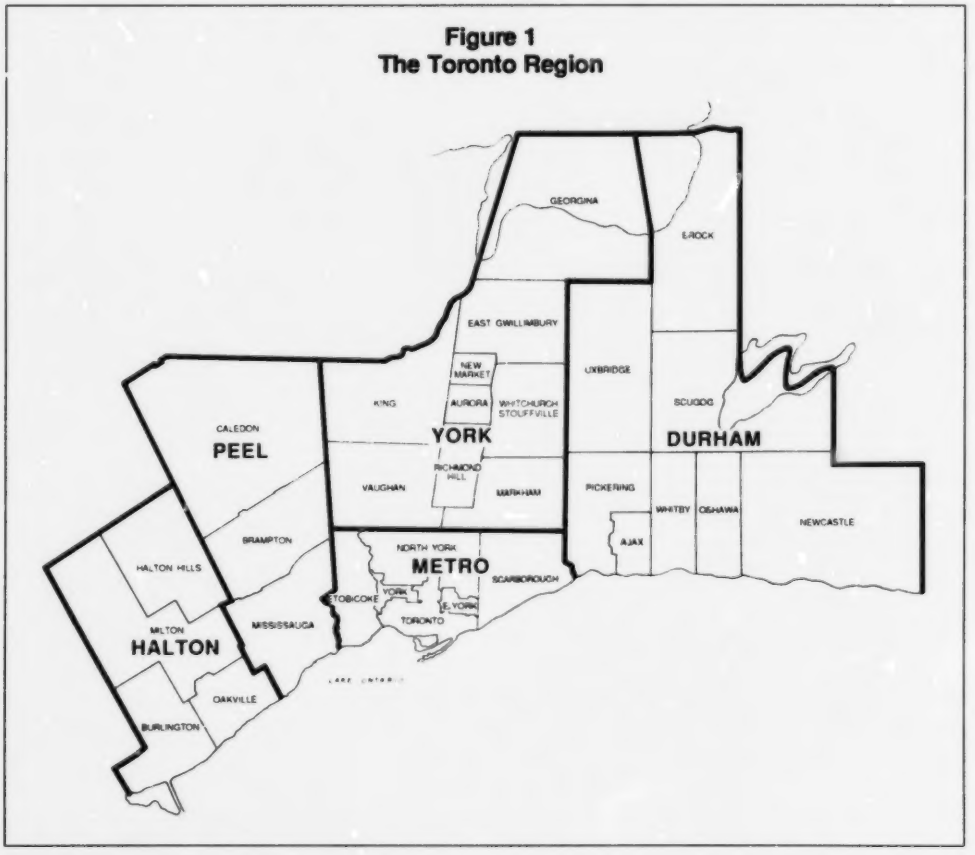
- These trends suggest increased usage of the private automobile for travel in low density suburban areas and increased reliance upon GO transit and the subway system for work trips downtown.

2 Population Growth in the Toronto Region

The Toronto Region is a 7,000 square kilometre area consisting of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and the regional municipalities of Durham, York, Peel and Halton. This large area, stretching from Burlington to Newcastle and as far north as Lake Simcoe, closely approximates the Toronto labourshed. The Region is slightly larger than the 1981 Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) defined by Statistics Canada since it includes the rural portions of the regional municipalities as well as all of the Oshawa CMA to the east. (Figure 1)

In 1981, the Toronto Region's population stood at 3.4 million - the largest urban area in Canada.

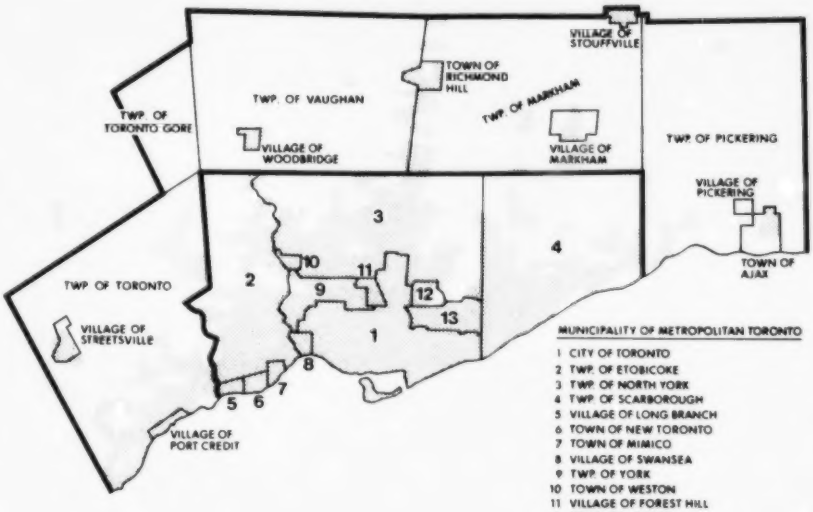
Figure 1
The Toronto Region



2.1 The Era of Rapid Growth: 1951-1971

In 1951, the Toronto Region's population stood at 1.4 million. Most of these people lived within the inner three municipalities of what are today Toronto, York and East York (Figure 2). The outer three Metro municipalities of Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough were only partially urbanized prior to Metro's incorporation in 1953 and contained only 16% of the Region's population. Outside Metro, the fringe portion of the Region (now the regional municipalities) was essentially rural, dotted with a number of small towns and villages.

Figure 2
Extent of Urbanization



Over the 1951-71 period, the Region's population grew extremely quickly. Fueled by a high birthrate and extensive post-war immigration, the population more than doubled to 2.9 million by 1971 (Table 1).

Table 1
Population Growth In The Toronto Region
1951-1971
(thousands)

Location	1951		1951-1961	1961		1961-1971	1971	
	#	%		#	%		#	%
City of Toronto	699	(50)	4	703	(33)	10	713	(24)
Inner Three	890	(64)	43	933	(44)	32	965	(33)
Outer Three	227	(16)	459	686	(32)	435	1,121	(38)
Metro Total	**1,117**	**(80)**	**501**	**1,169**	**(76)**	**467**	**2,086**	**(71)**
Fringe	**276**	**(20)**	**233**	**509**	**(24)**	**325**	**833**	**(29)**
Region	**1,394**	**(100)**	**734**	**2,127**	**(100)**	**792**	**2,919**	**(100)**

Inner three includes Toronto, York and East York
Outer three includes Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough
Fringe includes Durham, York, Peel and Halton Regions

Source: Census of Canada

More than half of the population growth over this period occurred in the outer three Metro municipalities. By 1971 North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke housed 38% of the Region's population. The area of continuous urbanization covered nearly all of Metropolitan Toronto and had begun to spill over Metro's boundaries, particularly to new housing being constructed on serviced land in Mississauga to the west.

While the size of the population of the inner three municipalities remained fairly constant over the 1951-71 period, in- and out-migration of their residents to other parts of the Region significantly transformed their structure. The inner three received massive influxes of immigrants from abroad into relatively inexpensive accommodation in centrally located neighbourhoods. At the same time, the inner three witnessed the out-migration of young families to the suburban areas of the outer three municipalities.

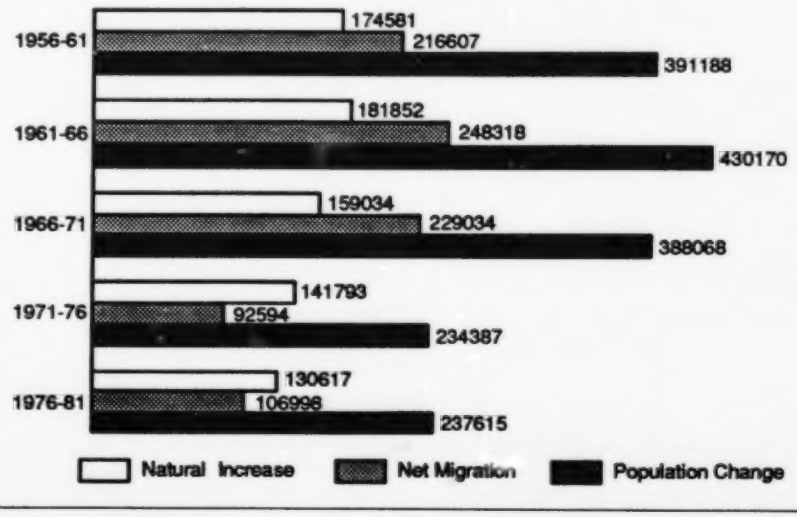
2.2 Slowdown in Growth, 1971-1981

By the early 1970s, the rate of population growth in the Region had slowed markedly. Birthrates, which peaked in the late 1950s, turned down sharply, signalling the end of the baby boom and a large drop in the natural increase component of population growth.

At the same time, the net migration of residents into the Region from other parts of Canada and abroad fell to about one-half of the level experienced in the 1960s, primarily due to a huge drop in immigration from outside Canada.

These factors slowed the rate of population growth in the Region from an annual average of 70,000-80,000 in the late 1960s to between 30,000 and 40,000 by the late 1970s (Figure 3).

Figure 3
Components of Population Growth
Toronto Region
1956-1981



2.3 New Growth Patterns

During the 1970s some very important new patterns of growth evolved within the Region. Most notable was the precipitous drop in population of the inner three municipalities. Between 1971 and 1981 the combined population of Toronto, York and East York fell by 130,000, a drop of 13% (Table 2).

Table 2
Population Growth In The Toronto Region
1971-1981
(thousands)

Location	1971		1971-1976	1976		1971-1981	1981	
	#	%		#	%		#	%
City of Toronto	713	(24)	-80	633	(20)	-34	599	(18)
Inner Three	965	(33)	-83	882	(28)	-46	836	(25)
Outer Three	1,121	(38)	122	1,243	(39)	59	1,302	(38)
Metro Total	**2,086**	**(71)**	**38**	**2,124**	**(67)**	**13**	**2,137**	**(63)**
Fringe	**833**	**(29)**	**223**	**1,056**	**(33)**	**224**	**1,280**	**(37)**
Region	**2,919**	**(100)**	**261**	**3,180**	**(100)**	**237**	**3,417**	**(100)**

Source: Census of Canada

The remainder of Metro, by now almost fully developed, experienced only modest growth of 180,000 over this same period. Metropolitan Toronto's population remained more or less constant at just over two million people.

As the urban area continued to grow and expand, the fringe municipalities began to assume a form of growth quite similar to that experienced by the outer three Metro municipalities 20 years previously.

Nearly all of the new population growth in the Region spilled over onto newly developed land on the outskirts of Metro. The fringe municipalities accommodated population growth of 450,000 between 1971 and 1981 (90% of the Region's increase). About half of this growth resulted from the outward movement of population - mainly young families - to newly constructed housing in the fringe. The remainder resulted from natural increase and migration from outside the Region.

2.4 Recent Growth, 1981-1985

Assessment enumeration data indicate that since the 1981 Census, the rate of population growth in the Region has risen slightly above the level experienced in the late 1970s (just over 50,000 per year) (Table 3).

Table 3
Recent Population Trends In The Toronto Region

Location	1981 Population	% of Region	Change 1981-85	% Change	1985 Population	% of Region
Inner Three	825,533	24.6	4,280	0.5	829,813	23.0
Toronto, City	594,081	17.7	4,321	0.7	598,402	16.6
York	132,336	3.9	1,400	1.1	133,736	3.7
East York	99,116	3.0	-1,441	-1.5	97,675	2.7
Outer Three	1,285,440	38.3	30,647	2.4	1,316,087	36.4
Etobicoke	296,277	8.8	2,082	0.7	298,359	8.3
North York	560,899	16.7	-6,449	-1.1	554,450	15.3
Scarborough	428,264	12.8	35,014	8.2	463,278	12.8
Metro Toronto	2,110,973	62.9	34,927	1.7	2,145,900	59.4
Fringe Total	1,245,882	37.1	222,789	17.9	1,468,671	40.6
Durham	279,161	8.3	35,077	12.6	314,238	8.7
York, Region	246,517	7.3	77,547	31.5	324,064	9.0
Peel	473,667	14.1	92,204	19.5	565,871	15.7
Halton	246,537	7.3	17,961	7.3	264,498	7.3
Region	**3,356,855**	**100.0**	**257,716**	**7.7**	**3,614,571**	**100.0**

Source: Data for Metro Toronto municipalities are based on the Metro Planning Department's P 1.20 summary. Data for fringe municipalities are based on Ministry of Revenue enumeration data

The loss of population in the inner three municipalities appears to have abated. The population of the Cities of Toronto, York and Etobicoke actually rose slightly while the City of North York and Borough of East York experienced a slight drop in population of just under 8,000 persons in total. The City of Scarborough experienced the largest population increase within Metropolitan Toronto, growing by just over 35,000 persons.

In recent years, a considerable amount of new housing has been constructed in central locations, contributing to an increase in population which more than offsets the decline in population still being experienced in many of the City's older existing neighbourhoods. Housing in major redevelopment projects such as Harbourfront and the Railway Lands will continue to increase the number of persons housed in central locations. These trends imply that the population level of the inner three municipalities has stabilized and may modestly increase over the next 20 years.

Trends also suggest that the outer three Metro municipalities may soon enter a phase of modest population decline owing to the aging of their current populations and limited new residential growth. The magnitude of the decline, however, is unlikely to be as severe as that experienced by the inner three over the 1971-81 period owing to the suburban nature of the outer three - lower initial population density, limited occurences of doubling up and initially smaller household sizes.

By the mid 1970s, the supply of developable land within Metro was virtually exhausted and with the exception of scattered pockets of redevelopment and limited new development in Scarborough most new growth had spilled over into the regions surrounding Metro. Since 1981, 91% of the additional growth in population of the region has been accommodated in the fringe. The largest share of the recent growth outside Metro has been concentrated in Peel Region, although the recent completion of the York-Durham servicing scheme to the north and east of Metro has attracted much new development, particularly to York Region which has grown by 14% since 1981.

On the basis of the distribution of housing lots which have been registered or have received draft plan approval, the pattern of development described above can be expected to continue through the 1980s.

3 Projected Population Growth to 2011

The Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department has recently (June 1986) released a comprehensive set of population, housing and employment projections for Metropolitan Toronto and the surrounding regional municipalities. Two types of projections were used by the Metro planners in their analysis.

3.1 Methodology

One method of projection, based on a "top down" or demographic model, utilizes anticipated changes in fertility and mortality rates as well as estimated changes in net migration levels for various parts of the region to predict population change. This method is particularly useful in projecting changes in the overall regional distribution of population by age groups and hence the anticipated demand for social and health care services, which are age dependent such as schools and hospitals. The demographic model is severely limited, however, in its ability to predict the net migration of population within the region. Factors such as the large scale redevelopment of land to create new housing within Metro, changes in consumer demand for different types of housing (eg., a shift in demand from single detached units to condominiums), changes in commuting costs or changes in the affordability of housing could substantially alter the distribution of population growth within the Region.

The second method, a "bottom up" or traffic zone method of projection is based primarily on where new housing is expected to be constructed and anticipated changes in the average size of households occupying new and existing units. The traffic zone approach is more realistic in predicting the likely distribution of population within the region (and thus net migration) but is less sensitive to demographic considerations, such as aging, which can greatly influence future estimates of the number of persons per household.

Both methods have strengths and weaknesses and both are presented here for comparative purposes. It should always be borne in mind that the projection of population, especially at the local level, is an inexact science. External factors such as a significant rise or fall in energy costs or an influx of refugees from a foreign country, cannot be predicted, but can have a tremendous impact on future trends. It is essential, therefore, that changes in population and employment levels be carefully monitored on an ongoing basis in order to track and adjust future projections as social and economic conditions change.

3.2 Results of Projections

Table 4 compares population projections for Metro and the surrounding fringe to the year 2011.

Both methods show that population growth in the region will continue, but the absolute rate of growth will fall from an average of around 50,000 persons a year between 1981 and 1991 to about 37,000 persons a year between 2001 and 2011. The demographic model predicts a slightly higher rate of growth, but the overall variance is minimal at the regional level. Locally, there are some significant variations. The traffic zone model reflects more growth in population resulting from anticipated redevelopment within Metro and particularly within the City of Toronto. The demographic model, on the other hand, predicts a drop in population in the City. Both models show that the outer three municipalities within Metro will begin to experience a drop in population after 1991. And both models show that the fringe will continue to absorb somewhere between 90% and 100% of the future population growth in the Region.

Table 4
Population Projections for Metro Toronto and Surrounding Regions

A) Traffic Zone Model

Location	1981	Chg. 1981-91	% Chg.	1991	Chg. 1991-01	% Chg.	2001	Chg. 2001-11	% Chg.	2011
Inner Three	835808	-9276	-1.1	826532	8929	1.1	835461	17782	2.1	853243
Toronto, City	599217	-3032	-0.5	596185	13340	2.2	609525	19744	3.2	629269
York	134617	-158	-0.1	134459	-2370	-1.8	132089	-1036	-0.8	131053
East York	101974	-6086	-6.0	95888	-2041	-2.1	93847	-926	-1.0	92921
Outer Three	1301587	55764	4.3	1357351	-6140	-0.5	1351211	-10496	-0.8	1340715
Etobicoke	298713	5417	1.8	304130	-4188	-1.4	299942	-3286	-1.1	296656
North York	559521	12447	2.2	571968	-9594	-1.7	562374	-6774	-1.2	555600
Scarborough	443353	37900	8.5	481253	7642	1.6	488895	-436	-0.1	488459
Metro Total	2137395	46488	2.2	2183883	2789	0.1	2186672	7286	0.3	2193958
Fringe Total	1280306	444471	34.7	1724777	395739	22.9	2120516	354800	16.7	2475316
Durham	283639	59157	20.9	342796	59569	17.4	402365	56517	14.0	458882
York, Reg.	252053	141822	56.3	393875	120943	30.7	514818	98465	19.1	613283
Peel	490731	201187	41.0	691918	179633	26.0	871551	163245	18.7	1034796
Halton	253883	42305	16.7	296188	35594	12.0	331782	36573	11.0	368355
Region	**3417701**	**490959**	**14.4**	**3908660**	**398528**	**10.2**	**4307188**	**362086**	**8.4**	**4669274**

B) Demographic Model

Location	1981	Chg. 1981-91	% Chg.	1991	Chg. 1991-01	% Chg.	2001	Chg. 2001-11	% Chg.	2011
Inner Three	835808	4292	0.5	840100	-2700	-0.3	837400	-18100	-2.2	819300
Toronto, City	599217	4583	0.8	603800	-700	-0.1	603100	-10600	-1.8	592500
York	134617	-117	-0.1	134500	0	0.0	134500	-4000	-3.0	130500
East York	101974	-174	-0.2	101800	-2000	-2.0	99800	-3500	-3.5	96300
Outer Three	1301587	33213	2.6	1334800	-2700	-0.2	1332100	-12900	-1.0	1319200
Etobicoke	298713	-713	-0.2	298000	-7300	-2.4	290700	-6200	-2.1	284500
North York	559521	10379	1.9	569900	1000	0.2	570900	-6200	-1.1	564700
Scarborough	443353	23547	5.3	466900	3600	0.8	470500	-500	-0.1	470000
Metro Total	2137395	37505	1.8	2174900	-5400	-0.2	2169500	-31000	-1.4	2138500
Fringe Total	1280306	478194	37.3	1758500	433200	24.6	2191700	419700	19.1	2611400
Durham	283639	76961	27.1	360600	61300	17.0	421900	62600	14.8	484500
York, Reg.	252053	139247	55.2	391300	117800	30.1	509100	127900	25.1	637000
Peel	490731	203569	41.5	694300	212400	30.6	906700	182900	20.2	1089600
Halton	253883	58417	23.0	312300	41700	13.4	354000	46300	13.1	400300
Region	**3417701**	**515699**	**15.1**	**3933400**	**427800**	**10.9**	**4361200**	**388700**	**8.9**	**4749900**

Source: Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department, June 1986

So while there are some interesting variations in the population projected internally within parts of the region, depending on the model used, both projection methods show clearly that nearly all future population growth within the Toronto Region can be expected to take place outside Metro's boundaries.

3.3 Future Age Structure

In spite of the general slowdown in overall population growth within the Region, the number of persons found in various age groups will change at significantly different rates than the total population, given the uneven age distribution of the current population and the aging of existing cohorts over time.

Between 1981 and 2011, the working age population (aged 15-64 years) will grow from 2.4 million to 3.15 million - a 31% increase. The number of children aged 0-14 is expected to remain constant at about 715,000 while the number of seniors (65 years and over) is projected to grow by 161% from 307,000 in 1981 to 801,000 in 2011 (Table 5).

This means that between 1981 and 2011, children as a proportion of the region's population will drop from 21% to 15%, the working age population will drop from 70% to 67% and seniors will rise from 9% of the region's population in 1981 to 17% by 2011.

At a more local level, Table 5 shows that changes in the distribution of population by age will not occur evenly across the region. For example, the number of children within Metro can be expected to drop significantly, but grow substantially in the fringe. Similarly, the working age population within Metro will decrease slightly in size but grow dramatically in the fringe. Seniors will account for 21% of Metro's population by 2011, but a significant increase in seniors can also be expected in the fringe. These local changes are critical since they will have a profound impact on the future demand and local distribution of services, housing and transportation facilities within the region.

Table 5
Projected Population by Age Group

Age Group	1981	Chg. 1981-91	% Chg.	1991	Chg. 1991-01	% Chg.	2001	Chg. 2001-11	% Chg.	2011
Metro Toronto										
0-14	395425	-29193	-7.4	366232	-54510	-14.9	311722	-37760	-12.1	273962
15-64	1515015	-15744	-1.0	1499271	-29748	-2.0	1469523	-13037	-0.9	1456486
65+	226170	92144	40.7	318314	87088	27.4	405402	58083	14.3	463485
Total	**2136610**	**47207**	**2.2**	**2183817**	**2830**	**0.1**	**2186647**	**7286**	**0.3**	**2193933**
Fringe										
0-14	321495	55430	17.2	376925	24784	6.6	401709	41918	10.4	443627
15-64	879430	326791	37.2	1206221	284944	23.6	1491165	202995	13.6	1694160
65+	80615	61076	75.8	141691	85951	60.7	227642	109914	48.3	337556
Total	**1281540**	**443297**	**34.6**	**1724837**	**395679**	**22.9**	**2120516**	**354827**	**16.7**	**2475343**
Toronto Region										
0-14	716920	26237	3.7	743157	-29726	-4.0	713431	4158	0.6	717589
15-64	2394445	311047	13.0	2705492	255196	9.4	2960688	189958	6.4	3150646
65+	306785	153220	49.9	460005	173039	37.6	633044	167997	26.5	801041
Total	**3418150**	**490504**	**14.3**	**3908654**	**398509**	**10.2**	**4307163**	**362113**	**8.4**	**4669276**

Source: Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department, June 1986

4 Projected Employment and Labour Force Growth

Metro's most recent projections report also included estimates of employment levels for Metro and the surrounding regions. Metro's employment projections will be discussed in more detail in Background Paper No. 6. The discussion here is limited to a simple comparison of projected labour force (where people live) to projected employment (where people work). The distribution of jobs and workers and ensuing commuting patterns is of critical importance to transportation planners, and will greatly influence decisions regarding the regional transportation infrastructure required to accommodate the additional flow of commuters.

4.1 Labour Force Growth

Future growth in the employed labour force is determined by applying participation and unemployment rates to projections of the working age population derived from the demographic model. Table 6 indicates that the employed labour force within Metro Toronto will peak in 1991 and gradually shrink in size thereafter as the rise in female participation rates levels off and Metro's population ages. The employed labour force of the fringe is projected to steadily increase to the point where there are more workers living in the fringe than in Metro sometime after the year 2001.

4.2 Employment Growth

Metro's most recent set of employment projections (June 1986) are based on a "bottom-up" land use approach. The projections show that the number of persons employed within Metropolitan Toronto will continue to grow fairly substantially from 1.2 million in 1981 to 1.5 million in 2011. The number of persons employed in the fringe is projected to increase from .43 million in 1981 to 1.08 million in 2011. So, while the number of workers projected for the fringe will grow at a much faster rate than Metro, Metro will continue to employ the greatest number of workers in the region (Table 6).

Table 6
Labour Force and Employment Projections
Metro Toronto and Surrounding Regions

A) Employed Labour Force

Location	1981	% of Region	%Chg. 1981-91	1991	% of Region	%Chg. 1991-01	2001	% of Region	%Chg. 2001-11	2011	% of Region
Metro	1157990	63.7	4.7	1214691	57.7	-1.8	1192630	51.7	-1.5	1175201	47.9
Durham	136340	7.5	17.4	164970	7.8	19.1	196462	8.5	11.2	218441	8.9
York	128700	7.1	35.9	200851	9.5	33.4	267836	11.6	16.3	311377	12.7
Peel	263415	14.5	29.7	374581	17.8	28.7	482017	20.9	16.9	563574	23.0
Halton	131050	7.2	12.3	149487	7.1	13.5	169734	7.4	7.8	183015	7.5
Region	**1817495**	**100.0**	**13.6**	**2104580**	**100.0**	**9.7**	**2308679**	**100.0**	**6.2**	**2451608**	**100.0**

B) Employment

Location	1981	% of Region	%Chg. 1981-91	1991	% of Region	%Chg. 1991-01	2001	% of Region	%Chg. 2001-11	2011	% of Region
Metro	1240000	69.8	7.9	1338068	63.6	6.4	1423744	60.3	4.3	1485586	57.9
Durham	103160	5.8	22.0	125850	6.0	19.7	150650	6.4	12.9	170150	6.6
York	105945	6.0	85.5	196550	9.3	23.3	242425	10.3	14.2	276775	10.8
Peel	227086	12.8	42.7	323995	15.4	26.0	408314	17.3	18.2	482561	18.8
Halton	99755	5.6	18.5	118200	5.6	14.1	134900	5.7	11.0	149800	5.8
Region	**1775946**	**100.0**	**18.4**	**2102663**	**100.0**	**12.2**	**2360033**	**100.0**	**8.7**	**2564872**	**100.0**

C) Labour Force / Employment Ratio (1)

Location	1981	1991	2001	2011
Metro	0.93	0.91	0.84	0.79
Durham	1.32	1.31	1.30	1.28
York	1.21	1.02	1.10	1.13
Peel	1.16	1.16	1.18	1.17
Halton	1.31	1.26	1.26	1.22
Region	**1.02**	**1.00**	**0.98**	**0.96**

Source: Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department, June 1986

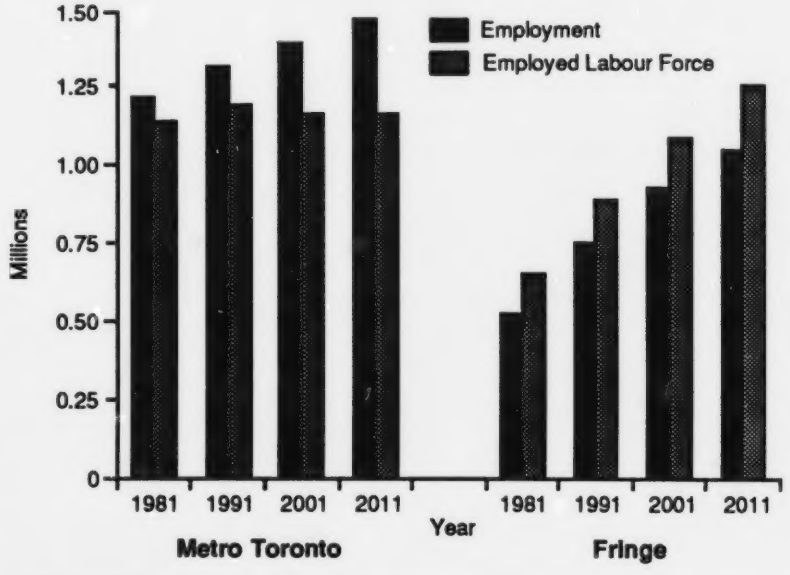
1) This ratio represents the projected employed labour force by place of residence divided by the total projected employment by place of work.

4.3 Employment and Labour Force Growth

The following chart clearly illustrates that within Metro the growth of employment (jobs) will outstrip the projected increase in workers living in Metro. In the fringe, on the other hand, employment growth will lag behind the growth in employed labour force (workers by place of residence). The convergence of these trends indicates that a significant increase in longer distance commuting, particularly from the fringe to Metro will occur (Figure 4). The labour force/employment ratios in Table 6 also show the same trend in a numerical fashion.

Unless there is a substantial increase in the number of employment opportunities in fringe locations or a large increase in the number of workers residing in Metro, the number of commuters crossing Metro's boundaries will rise substantially.

Figure 4
Comparison of Projected Employment and Labour Force Growrh 1981-2011



5 Summary

In spite of a slowdown in its overall rate of growth, the regional population will continue to expand at an annual rate of between 40,000 and 50,000 persons a year over the next 20 years. Nearly all of this additional population growth is expected to occur in the regional municipalities surrounding Metropolitan Toronto. By 2001, the combined population of Halton, Peel, York and Durham Regions is projected to exceed that of Metro Toronto.

Current trends indicate that labour force growth (where workers live) will decentralize at a more rapid rate than employment growth (where jobs are located). Continued growth in long distance commuting and increased dependence upon the private automobile for worktrips in suburban areas and GO transit and the subway system for worktrips downtown can be expected.